

SkillsLink News

Winter 1993

Volume 3 Number 1

ISSN 1183-4897

WE CAN'T GIVE YOU ONE GOOD REASON TO USE SKILLSLINK,
WE CAN GIVE YOU OVER 100,000!!!

EDITOR'S NOTES

Since the spring of 1989, SkillsLink has been collecting, classifying, and updating information on thousands of Ontario's workplace training resources so that you can have easy and efficient access to the training you need when you need it. In November of last year we were astounded to surpass the 100,000 item mark -- going well beyond the original estimate of how much training is out there in Ontario.

However, the quantity of information we manage represents only one aspect of the quality of service we constantly strive to provide. The timeliness of our updating, the accuracy and depth of our subject classification, and our responsiveness to you are the keystones of the SkillsLink training information service.

In this first issue of our third year of publishing SkillsLink News, we highlight these keystones -- currency, access, and responsiveness -- to give

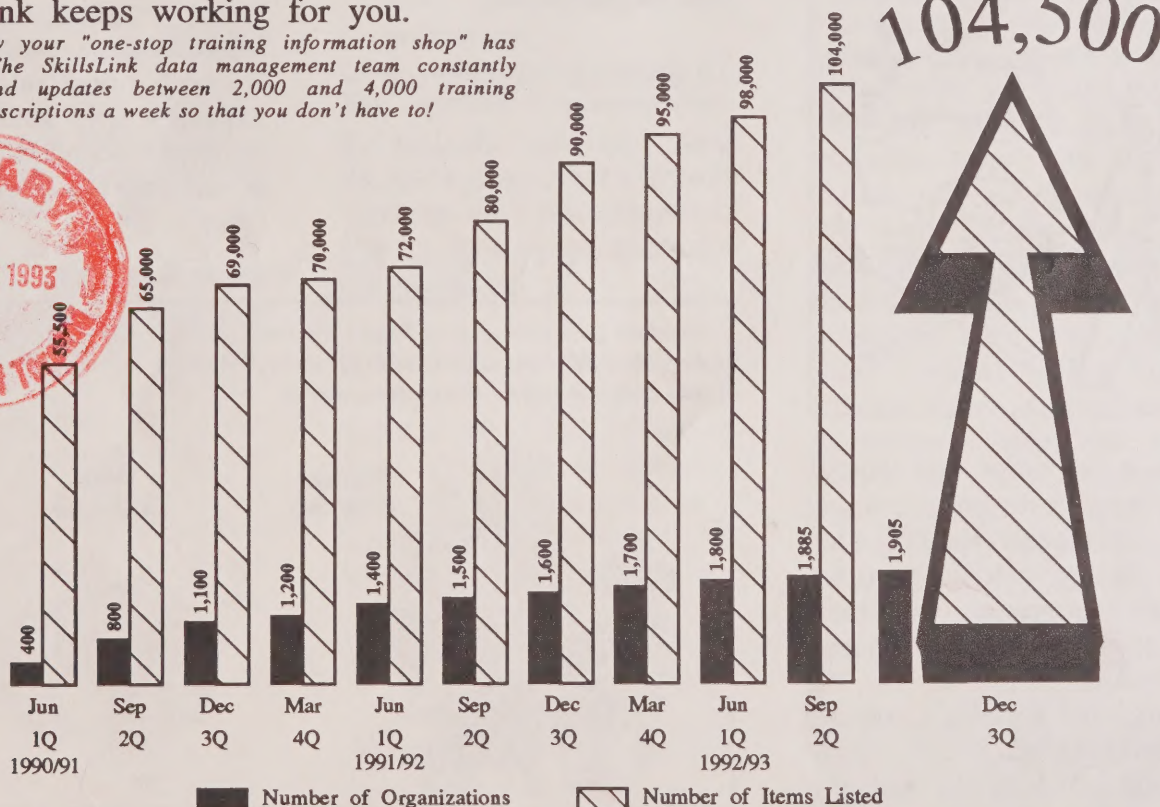
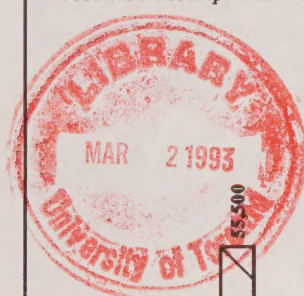
you a better understanding of the service you are receiving so that we can help you to use it more effectively. We have also scheduled our first public training sessions on how to use SkillsLink most effectively. They're free but space is limited. See the section on "training" for details.

(cont'd on next page)

Please circulate to:

SkillsLink keeps working for you.

Here's how your "one-stop training information shop" has grown. The SkillsLink data management team constantly collects and updates between 2,000 and 4,000 training resource descriptions a week so that you don't have to!



So, sit back, rest your beverage of choice on the SkillsLink coaster we sent with the last issue, and take five minutes to read SkillsLink News. (If you are a brand new client and this is your first issue of SkillsLink News, call us and we'll send you a coaster.)

Let us know what you think. Your feedback is important to us!

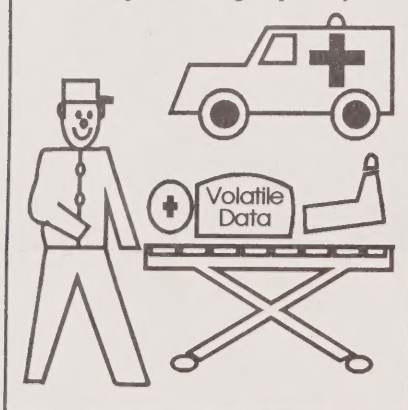
Marcia Olmsted

Marcia Olmsted
Director of SkillsLink

THE ONLY GOOD INFORMATION IS CURRENT

INFORMATION: Data triage at SkillsLink

A triage approach -- the most volatile information gets priority.



Because we know how crucial timeliness is to your training information needs, the SkillsLink team employs a triage approach to data management -- the most volatile information gets priority treatment. Information on seminars and workshops, training consulting services, self-instructional materials, and any

request from you gets organized, classified and loaded on SkillsLink so that you can access it within five working days of our receiving the source information from the training suppliers. Continuing education and full-time programs and courses get processed as much before registration dates as possible.

Processing the information once we receive it is only one part of SkillsLink information management. The biggest challenge we have is to get the information from the training suppliers so that we can get it to you. When we discover training suppliers whose information is not yet listed on SkillsLink, we contact them and encourage them to get their information to us immediately so that it can be provided to you. We work hard to ensure they understand your needs for timely, accurate and detailed information.

Through telephone, fax, conferences and meetings, and our SkillsLink Lister Newsletter, we stay in communication with an ever-increasing network of private

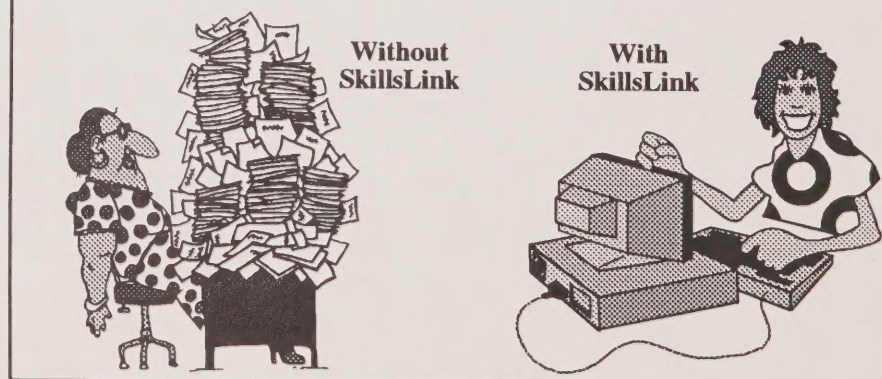
and public training suppliers in Ontario. Let us know what you think of their information and we'll work with them to help meet your needs.

Your feedback is important to them too! ■

**THE ONLY GOOD
INFORMATION IS
INFORMATION YOU CAN
FIND:** Access to information through subject classification and cross-referencing

Once we get the information in the door and determine how time-sensitive it is, we organize the facts provided to us by the training supplier so that you can start comparing what's available in your area of interest. While the order of presentation of the facts is always consistent (organization name followed by title, etc.), the number of facts varies according to how much information is supplied by the training organization. This explains why some training resource descriptions are only two screens long and others present as many as 20.

SkillsLink Data Management Team's front-end work of subject classification means that SkillsLink Users don't have to sift through pages of training resources, but can zero in on the subject they're interested in.



**THE ONLY GOOD
TRAINING
INFORMATION SERVICE
IS ONE THAT RESPONDS
TO YOUR NEEDS: let us
know what you think**

Since we launched almost three years ago, you have had a major part in shaping the contents and directions of the SkillsLink training information service. Even before the SkillsLink prototype was developed, some of you provided us with valuable feedback on what would make an electronic information service most useful to you.

We have spoken to many of you on the phone, at conferences, at your organizations, through SkillsLink News, and online through the "message to SkillsLink" option on the Main Menu.

Thanks to participants in Client Needs and Satisfaction Survey

In November of 1992, a random sampling of over 100 SkillsLink clients were contacted by Millward Brown Canada Inc., an independent research firm, to participate in a 20-minute telephone interview to determine how SkillsLink could serve them better. Thanks to all who gave their time to respond to the survey. We will report on the results in the next issue of SkillsLink News. For those who were not contacted, we always welcome your comments and suggestions.

Training

We offer new clients the opportunity to have compli-

mentary and customized training on SkillsLink and are pleased to give presentations tailored to groups of any size on request.

As a result of feedback to our November 1992 SkillsLink Client Survey, we will be holding another complimentary "public training session" for any of our online clients on Tuesday March 16, 1993 from 9-11:30 at Ontario Training Corporation in Toronto. Depending on feedback from the participants, we may incorporate public training sessions as a regular part of our client services program.

The training will review:

- coverage and scope of SkillsLink
- how we get the information to you through SkillsLink
- how to make SkillsLink work in any technical environment
- how to search most efficiently

In addition there will be a hands-on portion and a tour of SkillsLink facilities so that you can talk to the people who bring you the service.

If you wish to attend, call Sue or Alies at (416) 969-8713 in Toronto or 1-800-268-0248 from anywhere in Ontario. Registration will be based on a first-come, first-served basis, so let us know if you're interested.

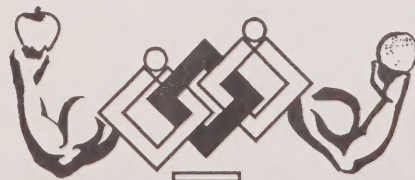
While the first session is scheduled in Toronto, sessions can be scheduled anywhere in Ontario based on demand. Call us for more information.

Technical Assistance

We are happy to speak with you or your technical people to gain a thorough understanding of your technical environment so that accessing SkillsLink and printing reports are easy for you. We understand that staff and technical environments change over time and we are here to help. Whether you are a new or a long-time client, call us for assistance. We can talk "techie talk" -- but we won't if you don't!

We support APPLES (and oranges)

Over 90% of SkillsLink clients use the SkillsLink customized communications software to access SkillsLink and produce enhanced reports. For those who prefer to use various off-the-shelf communications software packages, we can provide general support and will do our best to refer you to the customer service departments of the package in question. It should now be easier for clients who use Apple computers to access SkillsLink. Our client Mike Ciglic at Apple Canada Inc. is now working at the Apple Help Desk and encourages you to contact him about using SkillsLink with Apple computers. For more information, contact: Mike Ciglic, Service Product Engineering Representative, Help Desk, Apple Canada Inc., 7495 Birchmount Road, Markham, ON, L3R 5G2, (416) 513-5602, 1-800-263-3394, fax: (416) 513-5522. ■



What SkillsLink Clients Say:

Brian Ward of Alcatel Wire & Cable tells us he would like to see more schedules, target audience, and costs of courses listed. SkillsLink lists information that is provided to us by training suppliers. We let them know what you think. Thank you for your feedback.

We have had a lot of positive feedback to the SkillsLink coaster we included with the last issue of SkillsLink News. The coaster is an imitation 3.5" diskette with no software in it! One client said: "I made the mistake of opening my SkillsLink News, with the coaster, in front of two other people. Can I get two more?" Another told us: "I called you using the number on the coaster". It's not too late. If you would like extra coasters to rest your coffee on, call us.

What SkillsLink Listers Say:

"[I would like to]...compliment you and your SkillsLink team on the timely maintenance of the SkillsLink database. During a recent meeting of management trainers in Ottawa...I was pleased to see that not only was the database up-to-date, but it also accurately portrayed our specialized management courses as being targeted to scientists and engineers." Thomas E. Clarke, President, Stargate Consultants Limited.

"As a training consultant, I'm interested in receiving as much exposure as I can. After several prospective clients mentioned their training needs were well looked after by SkillsLink, I knew I'd better get connected." Gib Murdoch, Murdoch Training Consultants, Burlington, Ontario.

UPCOMING EVENTS

It was great seeing more than 70 of you at the "Over 100,000 Listings Celebration" at the OSTD/HRD Canada Conference November 30!

Come and let us know what you think at the Human Resources Professionals Association of Ontario (HRPAO) Conference at the Sheraton Centre, Toronto, February 24-26, Booth # 84.

ISO 9000

A half-day seminar on ISO 9000 is being held in Toronto on April 27, 1993. *ISO 9000: the training perspective* will provide valuable information on the ISO 9000 certification process, and the training and quality challenges that will develop as a result.

The seminar will be of interest to **trainers, training managers, quality assurance managers, and supervisors** in the manufacturing, service, technical, communication and information systems industries.

For further information about this half-day seminar, call Sherry Franz at (416) 969-2451.

This seminar is presented in partnership by Ontario Training Corporation, Business Resource International, and Kodak Canada.

Contact us at

**(416) 969-2438 or
1-800-268-0248 or
Fax: (416) 975-0782**

**SkillsLink...
"Training Decisions
Made Simple"**



SKILLSLINK

